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Tofte Suit Demands Letter Be Returned

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—Former agent Hans V. Tofte filed an action in the U.S. District Court here Wednesday demanding return of a letter he claims was written to him by Richard Helms, director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Tofte claims that the "purloined letter" has a value of \$25,000 to him, and he named Helms as one of four defendants responsible for taking it from Tofte's Washington home in late July.

OTHER defendants named in the action are Kenneth R. Slocum, an employee of the CIA; Mrs. Judy Slocum, his wife, and Charles D. Speake, a security officer at CIA.

Mr. and Mrs. Slocum and Speake have been identified as the persons who entered the Tofte home and took a large number of classified CIA papers and other documents from a third-floor study.

It was claimed that it was a security violation for Tofte to have the papers at his home, but Tofte said he had them in a secure place and that many top officials in government took classified papers home.

THE SUIT Tofte filed yesterday involves a letter which he said he received from Helms several years ago which included laudatory comments and statements relative to Tofte's career that Tofte regards as important in his controversy with the CIA.

The letter is regarded as important for two basic reasons:

Tofte was fired from his \$25,000-a-year job in the aftermath of the raid on his home, and is currently involved in a dispute with the CIA over his employment status at the time he was fired and his pension rights.

Tofte has stated that the letter from Helms was in a scrapbook that was among the documents seized by Mr. and Mrs. Slocum and Speake.

He contends that when the scrapbook was returned, the Helms letter had been removed. Helms has told reporters there was no such letter.

The lawsuit for return of the letter or \$25,000 in damages may lead the court to use its discovery procedures to put Helms, Mr. and Mrs. Slocum and Speake under oath and question them about the raid and the disposition of the papers.

IN TAKING the action, Tofte also opens himself to questioning under oath by lawyers for the four defendants.

Tofte said he believes that the Helms denials have questioned his integrity, and he asserts that he wants to "force the issue" with Helms to prove his own credibility and the lack of credibility of Helms and others in CIA.

Tofte claims to have other evidence that proves the existence of the "purloined letter."